

F CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

REPORT OF SPECIAL MEETING, APRIL 3, 1900.

A special meeting of the CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY was held in the lecture hall of its building on Tuesday evening, April 3, 1900, at eight o'clock, pursuant to notice.

President JOHN N. JEWETT in the chair.

The following interesting papers were presented, and read:

FATHER MARQUETTE:

BY

FRANKLIN MACVEAGH.

MR. PRESIDENT: My subject is Marquette. Marquette the martyr; hero and martyr. Hero if intrepid courage in great adventure, and vast self-sacrifice on a plane of noble enthusiasm makes a hero—martyr though dying by the sentence of his own sacrifice. And martyr not to his faith only, but to his faith and to his good works and to his great deeds alike.

And why do I tell this twice told tale? First, I tell it because I am fond of it myself. Again, I tell it because it is never idle to stop in the vast hurry of our bread-getting and money-getting life to contemplate for a while one of those rare few men who, though illustrious by reason of the historical importance of their deeds, have their first claim to the reverence of the world by reason of the exceptional, the phenomenal elevation of their characters, their aims and their private lives. Of these men Marquette is one; and they are rare men indeed. Admitted to the parliament of history by their celebrity, they represent in it not alone what is illustrious; but they represent there, what else would find no representation in it, the unsung, the uncommemorated virtue of the world. Their constituency is the scattered community of men and women, of whatever nations or religions or times, whose lives are pure and whose aims are noble.

And then, in the third place, it is right, I think, to remind ourselves that, though individuals here and there certainly do so, we do not as a community appreciate the interest of the early history of the West, nor the very remarkable men who figured in it. Nor can it be amiss before a Chicago audience to recall, from the almost neglected history of the very spot on which we live, the figure of a man whose fame and character would shed upon Chicago the light of an exceptional distinction if the city would but learn to recognize them with sympathy and treasure them with becoming reverence: a fame that is better understood almost everywhere else than here where it might properly be a household word —a household word conferring a constant benefaction. There was a particular suggestion years ago to see to it that the fame of Marquette is cherished among us. It was given by the two-hundredth anniversary of Marquette's visit here. An effort was made to have that significant anniversary appropriately recognized; but quite without avail. Other prominent things which were the expressions and interests of our materialism and our ever-present present, quite crowded out thoughts of heroes and of the past. The present in this city is surely not "the fleeting present"; for it seems everlasting. We must confess that Chicago in the aggregate has as yet no historic feeling, and but little sentimental life of any sort. Her life for the most part is in to-day; she is not even profoundly interested in the future yet. And regard for the past, as we all know, comes latest. Regard for the past is the interest of mature life, and Chicago is yet in her first fine vigorous and somewhat thoughtless youth. A boy, at first, lives entirely in the present. To-day is all of life to him for his mind is narrow and his existence a monotone. By and by as he grows toward manhood he lives also in the future—as imagination becomes a force in him. Later still when he has grown to the full stature of matured manhood he lives partly in the past—because in the man memory becomes infused with sentiment and reason. But surely the early history of the West ought to stir us. It ought to be a part of our treasures. It is inspiring and it is ours. If it does not altogether belong to

our race it is at any rate a part of the land which is now becoming in the true sense our home.

And this first history of the West has the wider interest still of a famous part, a heroic part even if a later part of the great history of the new birth of the world. For the grand invasion of this continent by Maritime Europe, for which the surprising way was opened by the great enterprise of great Columbus, was an effect of that marvelous expansive impulse, itself an expression of the noble impatience of the Renascence, which widened the narrow horizon of Europe until it became coterminous with the world. The world of Europe was hampered by horizons which defeated knowledge; but there gathered there such a compressed force of the spirit of discovery and adventure that it needs must burst forth and overrun the globe. On every side, the horizon of Europe was driven back by a legion of adventurous men who were strangers to fear and to fatigue. American exploration and colonization were born of the impulse of the Renascence. And matter of fact as it is to-day America's early days are a romance. It was hid from the world by seas that stretched away, in the imaginations of men, into gloom and death; and for centuries it lay awaiting discovery.

Europe at last was equal to such great enterprise. But it took what the world could muster of science; and added to this a courage disciplined by the Moorish Wars, supported by religious enthusiasm and inspired by the adventurous spirit of a new era. The first history of America is the story of restless adventure; of cavaliers whose exploits belittle fiction; of sailors who in their crazy crafts believed themselves to be cavaliers; of workmen who had the hearts of soldiers; of Puritans who carried in their brave souls the seeds of a free nation; of priests who were heroes and martyrs; of women who were saints upon Earth. In the midst of this there was much that was cruel, much that was mean; but far above all else the early history of America was distinguished superlatively by courage, adventure, high purpose, Christian heroism, chivalry and romance.

In this Christian heroism, this romance, the history of the West fully shares ; and in the history of the West though Marquette is not the greatest figure, of the great figures he is the purest, the noblest and the best.

At once upon the discovery of America, Spain, Portugal, England and France began to explore, to despoil, to colonize and to convert it. France alone of these nations failed utterly to maintain herself. Except a remnant on the Lower St. Lawrence and some traces along the Mississippi, there remains of France in America only a few local names, and the traditions of a generous and humane policy that was loftily maintained for a time by the ready sacrifices of heroic men. Of these nations Spain and France equally proclaimed a religious with their secular purpose ; but France, and France only, maintained her religious designs with such deep devotion and lofty heroism as must for all time challenge the admiration of the world. England, however, and France alike, were earnest and sincere. But their characters differed utterly ; their policy and methods as utterly ; and their success differed as widely as these. The story of the English in America is relatively matter of fact history, interesting especially to the political student. The story of the French is only interesting to the political student as a complete political failure, but to all men of sentiment as an episode, a romance creditable in the highest degree to humanity.

Of the history of France in America, no other portion is so highly to her honor, or to the honor of humanity, as the lives and labors of her Missionary Priests. And of all the wonderful line of missionaries of France, in the New World, Marquette is easily the most distinguished.

Let us not misconceive the spirit and lives of the French missionaries in North America because of our familiarity with present missionary ideas and conditions. We can hardly say too much in praise of contemporary missionaries, but conditions have changed. Marquette and his compeers traveled on snow-shoes when they did not go barefoot ; they lived on moss when they could not luxuriously feast upon pounded maize ; they lived in bark huts when fortunate enough to sleep indoors ; and they died of labor and ex-

posure when they were not murdered by the Indians. Their missions, therefore, existed without great revenues; and the most they asked of their friends at home was prayers for the souls they had come to save.

Nor let us fail to conceive the phenomenal nobleness of these French men because they were heroes and martyrs in the name of a church that may not be ours, and which expresses itself in ways that we may not prefer. Whosoever church it is and whosoever it is not, it is at least a great church beyond compare; and it has in its history splendid epochs, when it commanded greater self-sacrifice and higher endeavor than Christianity has otherwise known since its first lofty days. One such epoch, raised distinctly above the level of the centuries, was the epoch of the French Jesuits in North America. They were the elect of a society which had a first claim upon the most fervent souls. The records of humanity will be sought in vain for the story of purer lives, of more steadfast apostleship or of sterner martyrdoms. Jogues, Bressani, Daniel, Brebeuf, Lalemant, Garnier, Marquette, living and dying, illustrated the loftiest virtue in the world. No praise is too extravagant; no language is too sacred to apply to them. They were a "Glorious Company of Apostles;" they were a "Noble Army of Martyrs."

Jacques Marquette was born at Laon, France, in 1637—June 10th—and died about Easter time, May 18th, 1675. I have heard him called "old Father Marquette"—but he died when he was only 37. It does not take very long, you see, for a great soul to impress itself for all time upon the heart of the world.

He came to America in 1666, though his American career hardly began until 1668. His career, therefore, so far as the world knows it, lasted but seven years. Is it not wonderful how quickly and easily the world finds out its heroes? His whole life was short, his American life very short; his career was in a wilderness; and he has no biographer. But who questions the fixity of his historical position? Who doubts the growth of his fame and influence as the West awakens step by step to a sense of its history?

Of his life at home in France—that is of nearly the first thirty of the short thirty-seven years of this young man's

life, scarcely anything is told. He was a well born gentleman—a man of an ancient and distinguished family—of a family that mingled in affairs of state and in works of philanthropy—of a family that one hundred years later sent three young men to fight in our Revolutionary War with LaFayette and de Rochambeau. So much is known. Then at 17 he became a Jesuit like many another ardent youth; and in due time he became a priest. That is nearly all.

In 1666, he came to America as a missionary. And no man ever went into a new world more worthily. Of that you may feel perfectly sure. He came first to serve religion and to spread its beneficent life and its sure salvation. More than one man of his time did that as well. None did it better. But France, as I have said, had both a religious and a secular purpose in America. No other man of France, whether priest or layman, combined in his own labors the best parts of both these purposes as did Marquette. The significance of his American life is, therefore, both political and religious. He was a missionary and a discoverer. He was no less a missionary because a discoverer. He quit the easy life of a French gentleman, when to be a French gentleman was the finest thing in the world, and exchanged it for the life of a priest and missionary because he was by nature of the stuff from which the grandest priests and missionaries are made.

When Marquette came to America, France had long been in possession of Canada on the St. Lawrence and the lower lakes; and the time was at hand to push onward through the wilderness to the upper lakes. In this new advance Marquette was destined for a distinguished part. He was in a short time sent into this frontier field—the frontier of a frontier. There he spent five of his famous seven years. He learned six Indian languages, he journeyed widely, he established missions and founded towns, he taught and preached. In brief he led the life of a Jesuit Missionary in the wilds of Early America. Can we mistake the life he led? Five years—five years in the wilds on our Northern lakes two hundred years ago—four thousand miles from home, hundreds of miles of wilderness from even a semblance of France. Five years that seem to us so short; that must have

been so long. Five years in the savage North without one day of home or France—without one hope of home or France. Five years in which this cultured mind had not one touch with culture, in which this loving heart had not one comfort of home. In which he carried his life in his hand, and had not one advantage of civilization or one moment's protection of law. Five years in which perished every dream of home or country. Snow and ice and savages for five winters. He had nothing to live for but duty and nothing to hope for but death. And when his magnificent duty was done nothing came but death. Is it a wonder that these years, though they only confirmed his purpose to devote every breath, every shred of his life to his mission brought him broken health and a constitution beyond repair? This young man did absolutely all he could; and five ardent years consumed his strength. A fatal malady took hold upon him; and though in the next two years he grew better and worse, at the end he died.

Did he spend his invalid life in repose? It is a shame to ask it. These two years are the years especially that made him famous.

During his life on the lakes—in the advance of the French movement in America—he conceived and faithfully cherished the design of discovering the Mississippi. This purpose possessed his imagination; and I have sometimes fancied him standing upon some outlook on the shore of Lake Superior, in the full expression of his noble spirit, looking into the West and feeding his lonely soul with visions of his great adventure. Not, however, with the purpose of discovery only was his mind inflamed. He knew the political and commercial and scientific importance of the discovery and he valued it for the sake of France. But he longed, also, to carry the gospel to the far-away tribes on the banks of that unknown river, and to establish a mission among them. It is this double purpose and this double devotion that distinguished Marquette from other great discoverers, and from other great priests.

He was obliged to defer his expedition from time to time; but by and by, in 1673, Frontenac, the French Governor at Quebec, organized a party for the discovery under

the command of Joliet, after whom our neighboring city is named. He sent Joliet to Marquette at the Straits of Mackinac; and Marquette was appointed by his superior to be Joliet's associate in the exploration. Joliet was by nature a trader; Marquette was by nature a discoverer; which perhaps explains how to Marquette, without effort of his, the honor of the discovery chiefly clings.

With five Frenchmen Marquette and Joliet on May 17, 1673, set forth. They followed from Mackinac down the west side of Green Bay to the present town of Green Bay —then already established. Thence along the Fox River and through Winnebago Lake; again along the Fox to a portage between the Fox and the head-waters of the Wisconsin. Thence to the Wisconsin and down this "wild beautiful river," as another traveler called it a few years later, until it came to the great Mississippi, at the point where Prairie du Chien now stands. Then they turned their canoes into the great unknown river and steered them as far as the Arkansas, or the unnamed river that is now called the Arkansas, exploring and preaching and teaching as they went. They were now convinced that the great river flowed into the Gulf of Mexico, and this completed their purpose; and growing fearful lest they should be slain and thus the great fruits of their discovery be lost to France, they turned back and came paddling their canoes laboriously against the current until they reached the Illinois, into which they turned. They came slowly, still exploring and preaching, along the Illinois, the Desplaines and the Chicago rivers to Lake Michigan and then onward back to the Straits. This is the first time the site of Chicago was visited by civilized men.

Such is the mere bare outline of the great discovery. It is not difficult, however, for us now to appreciate its importance nor to fill in the colors of the adventure. The Mississippi was the objective of Western discovery in the time of Marquette. Its importance to France was exceedingly great, for France, England and Spain were competing for supremacy in America. Here was a great continental river unknown except by rumor to any European. It was believed to be the great artery of the Continent and that its

possession by either of the great rivals would almost decide the contest. Settlement—colonization—at first but fringed the Continent along its eastern shores. France slowly pushed her way inward to the great lakes; but cautiously, one station giving neighborhood to another a little in advance. Then came the time when discovery launched itself and sailed away into unknown regions, as in the careers of Cortes and Pizarro, and Marquette with his small party cut loose from all that was known and boldly sought the alluring but dangerous unknown.

France had pushed its commerce inland to the lakes and was carrying its wares laboriously a thousand miles. If a great outlet could be found by river to the Atlantic then trade it was thought would flow easily as in Europe. Then wealth need no longer be dragged to France, but would flow in an easy and affluent current. And so Empire would follow, as Empire and Culture always have followed, in the footsteps of successful commerce.

Rumor carried by the Indian tribes told of this great river; which might flow into the Gulf of Mexico or might perchance carry the adventurous traveler to the Vermillion Sea. And rumor did not fail to surround the unknown river with every terror that could appal or dissuade discovery. With these Marquette was familiar. But he loved France more than his life; and he also heard in imagination night and day, the piteous call of the far-away tribes to come with his helpful gospel and save them from eternal death. He had the deep devotion of the missionary, and the high conception and courage of the discoverer. It was no holiday excursion to him. He knew the hazard. He said, he gladly exposed his life; and Marquette never boasted.

And he did expose his life for days and nights continually until months rolled away. Contemplate the little band of seven exploring twenty-seven hundred miles through a region where the face of a civilized man had never been seen before. Danger on every side of them. No refuge anywhere outside of their steady courage. Among a people trained to treachery and with whom pity had no prompter when policy was silent. A race among whom the murder of a stranger was not a crime; among whom hospitality did

not include the idea of protection; whose only lenity proceeded from fear or indifference. Such men Marquette found before him, behind him and about him when he went to find the great river, and to carry salvation to lost nations on its borders.

Marquette's health was now completely shattered. He did not repine. He was content. He had done his duty. He had served God and his country. He had, he believed, saved souls, and had done a great service to the Future. To his simple soul that was enough and more than enough. Nor did he go or seek to go to Quebec, where praise and reputation awaited him. He did not attempt to place his great service before the Government. He stayed at his frontier post. Nor did he ever go to Quebec or France. He had no time to protect his fame. His remaining days were too short and precious to be given to personal glory. He purposed to die in the wilderness doing his duty. Would not a familiar knowledge of such a man be of untold value to the men and the youth of this city?

Nursing his health for the completion of his long cherished design, he persuaded himself, after a year of further labor at the Straits, that he was equal to the one task which especially remained. This was to establish, to the honor of The Virgin and for the salvation of souls, a mission on the banks of the Illinois. This his cherished design he hoped to complete, knowing it was to be the last service of his life—the crowning sacrifice of those last two years that have brought him enduring fame.

He journeyed hundreds of miles in the face of winter into the lonely and savage wilderness. In November or December, with two attendants, he reached the Chicago river. Here his health again gave away; and so weak and ill had he become that though so near the tribes he came to save he could go no further. For four months he lived upon the desolate banks of our river, in mid-winter. His faithful attendants built a hut in which he lived. Thus Marquette became again identified with Chicago—this time as the first civilized resident upon its site; and this constitutes the greatest honor of which this city can boast.

Lying or weakly sitting in his lonely hut on the banks

of our river, the whole desolate region covered with snow and ice, with desolation and wilderness all about him, himself chilled with the cruel winter winds of our prairie and lake, his health long since gone and his strength now gone too, and death standing daily at his lonely side, the great, gentle spirit of Marquette never revealed itself more superbly. No matter his misfortunes, he permitted no thought but of his duty; no matter his helplessness, he contemplated no refuge but the banks of the Illinois. He spent days and nights in religious devotions, and at last spent nine days in fasting and sacrifice that the Blessed Virgin might still permit him to carry at least one word of the Gospel to the Indians of the Illinois. And he believed the Virgin granted his prayer.

Such a life upon the site of this city—the first civilized life in its history—might well have dedicated it at the least to the highest ambitions of citizenship.

About the end of March—the year was 1675—he felt himself revive at last, and having faith that strength would be vouchsafed until he reached his aim he journeyed to Kas-kaskia—an Indian town he named himself, and which was near where Ottawa or rather Utica now is. Knowing his time was short he preached and taught as best he could and lost no time. He knew he should not preach again. And when he had taught and preached his last and knew his end was near, with his faithful men he took the way to Mackinac. They reached our lake and started in their rude canoes around its bend and down its eastern shore. They journeyed on a speck of civilization in that wide expanse of savage lake and land; and as they paddled their canoes one afternoon in that lonely springtime, the good Marquette, who calmly felt the long looked for end had come, asked his men to take him to the shore just where a little river, since fondly named for him, ran down into the lake. They took him to the shore and built a birch-bark hut in which he might lie down and rest. He told them though that he should not live, and asked that they would make his grave, when he was dead, near where he lay. He thanked them for their constant kindness, regretted to them that he had been such trouble, then said good night and bade them go and

sleep, saying that he would call them when it was necessary. In the middle hours of that night a quiet voice awakened the sleepers. He said his hour had come at last. He then thanked God that He permitted him to die a missionary in the Wilderness; and asked his men to hold for him a crucifix on which he gazed until the last. Even Mackinac, even that much of home and love, he did not reach.

And so lived and died Father Marquette. Was he not both hero and martyr?

And now I am done. Bancroft has said "The West will build his monument." I trust it may. Noble, gentle, loving, brave Marquette! Honors paid to him would have the peculiar grace of honors unsought and uncontemplated. He did not seek to fill a great place among his contemporaries; and he died without a thought of posterity or fame.

MARQUETTE AT MICHILLIMACKINAC:

BY

EDWARD OSGOOD BROWN.

After the great pleasure that you must have felt with me in hearing the very delightful paper on Father Marquette which Mr. MacVeagh has just given us, you will feel I am sure, but slight, if any disappointment when I say to you, as I am obliged to do, that although I am announced also for a "paper" this evening, it is of the very slightest, and that for the few words which I have to say, "Marquette at Mackinac" is hardly a suitable title. I could suggest, however, myself, nothing better than "Marquette at Michillimackinac," and this suggestion reached your Secretary too late for a correction of his notice.

The name, Mackinaw, or Mackinac, as contrary to all principles of euphony and all local usage and tradition, Indian, French and English—recent hotel residents of the beautiful island at the entrance to Lake Michigan, insist upon pronouncing it, is generally and I suppose properly applied to the island itself—but the whole country about the Straits between the Northern and Southern peninsulas of Michigan from the Sault St. Marie on the North to Arbor

Croche—or Harbor Springs—on one side, and Green Bay on the other, on the South—was known as Michillimackinac in the time of Father Marquette. And it is of the traditions relating to his life, and labors, death and burial in that country that I wish to say a few words. Of course Marquette, to whom the Straits of Mackinac were a home from 1671 to 1673, must frequently have visited the Turtle's Back, as the Indian called the beautiful and loftily rising Island of Mackinac itself, but despite the persistency of a tradition among the Indians and half-breeds, fostered by the local pride of resident clergymen of the island, that he settled there originally, when, in 1671, with his Huron Indian flock flying before the Sioux from the Mission of St. Esprit at Lapointe near the Western End of Lake Superior, he came to Michillimackinac, there is scant proof of the fact, if it be one.

What is certain is, that very soon, at all events, he and his flock had established themselves on the Mainland—the Northern Peninsula of Michigan—and named the Mission St. Ignace. There, in 1672, a chapel had been built surrounded by the cabins of the Indians, the whole village being enclosed within a stockade, for better protection against enemies. This place is at the Northern end of the present village or City of St. Ignace. I can identify it to those who may on one of the Lake Superior steamers have stopped at the pier at St. Ignace four miles this side of Mackinac Island—as being at the point on the long, long street which sweeps around the bay and forms the main part of that settlement, which is most remote from that stopping place.

Father Charlevoix, and following him evidently, later writers, have expressed wonder at Father Marquette's selecting what they term so undesirable a place for his Mission and the settlement of the Hurons. To justify that wonder they speak of the intense cold and the sterility of the soil.

Charlevoix says that Father Marquette determined the choice of the spot; but Father Marquette himself says that the Indians had previously signified their design to settle there, led by the abundance of game, the great quantity of fish and the adaptability of the soil for maize, the Indian's chief agricultural product.

But apart from the question whether Father Marquette located the Indians, rather than the Indians Father Marquette, Charlevoix seems to me to speak with less sagacity than is usual in a Jesuit priest, in so expressing himself. If Father Marquette *did* determine the place of settlement, it seems to me easy to understand.

The Jesuit Missionaries in America, in their burning zeal had exiled themselves from the world of artistic beauty into which they were born, they had doomed themselves to much that was hateful and disgusting—to sodden forests and smoky wigwams; to filthy food and unclean companions; but they had preserved their love of beauty, and nature to them took the place of art. I wonder not, and who that is familiar with Michillimackinac can wonder, that Father Marquette should have been glad to settle where a wonderfully beautiful winter landscape alternates with an incomparable one of shining summer seas?

On the contrary I can well imagine him, when first he gazed from the bluffs upon the country called Michillimackinac, exclaiming, as Scott makes King James, of Loch Katrina:

"And what a scene were here, * *
For princely pomp or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow a lordly tower,
In that soft vale a lady's bower!
On yonder meadow far away,
The turrets of a cloister gray!
How blithely might the bugle horn
Chide on this Lake the lingering morn!
And when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matin's distant hum!"

Until the 17th of May, 1673, Marquette labored at this Mission with abundant and encouraging results, to judge from his letter to his superior in 1672. He says that he had almost five hundred Indians about him, who wished to be Christians, who listened with eagerness to his teaching, who brought their children to the chapel to be baptized, and came regularly to prayers. Be the wind or cold what it might, many Indians came twice a day to the chapel. When he was obliged to go to the Sault for a fortnight, they counted the

days of his absence, repaired to the chapel for prayers as though he were present, and welcomed him back with joy.

"The minds," he writes, "of the Indians here are now more mild, tractable and better disposed to receive instruction than in any other part."

But the Illinois mission that he had planned, and the Great River that he wished to explore and dedicate to Mary, were always in his thought, and it was with great joy, therefore, that, in the spring of 1673, he heard that he had been ordered by his superior to turn over the mission at Michillimackinac to a successor and himself accompany Louis Joliet, designated by the governor of Canada, in the exploration of the Mississippi.

Mr. MacVeagh has told you of that journey. Marquette did not return from it to the mission of St. Ignace, but stopped during a whole year, from the autumn of 1673 to the last days of October, 1674, at the mission of St. Francis Xavier on Green Bay. When, after his second visit to the Illinois Indians, he died, on his return journey to Michillimackinac, as Mr. MacVeagh has told you, it was near where stands the present City of Ludington.

Twice a wooden cross has been raised to mark the spot—once when his companions left him there to keep on their saddened way to Michillimackinac, and once again when, in 1821, a man who was, at the same time, the last of the great French Missionary priests and the first of a long series of true American Apostles—Father Gabriel Richard—with the assistance of Indians, sought out the spot, raised over it a wooden cross, and cut with his knife upon it:

FR. J. MARQUETTE
Died here 1st May, 1675.

He then celebrated mass on the spot and pronounced a eulogium on the great missionary.

He probably thought that Marquette's remains still lay there—for at that time the Jesuit Relations which told of the translation of his body to the mission church of St. Ignace, in 1677, were not accessible to every reader, as through the work of modern historians and scholars they have since be-

come. Nevertheless, the tradition that some great missionary was buried on the site of the St. Ignace mission always existed. Father Jacker, a Jesuit friend of mine—an ardent and judicious historical scholar, who in late years had charge of the present parish at St. Ignace told me, in 1886, that a very honest and intelligent Indian then living, one Joseph Misitago, had told him that, in that same year, 1821, he had met Father Richard lost in the woods back of the present site of St. Ignace, where he had gone in search of any traces of that church and burial place. But it did not appear that he had connected the tradition with Marquette.

A "Relation" of Father Dablon, however—lying from 1677 to 1800 in the Library of the Jesuit College at Quebec, and by the last Canadian survivor of the order, Father Cazot—in 1800, (for after Canada became an English dominion the reception of new members was forbidden for a time), turned over to the Gray Nuns of the Hotel Dieu and by them recommitted to the Jesuits who in 1842 re-established the society in Canada—was with Marquette's journal and many other valuable papers in 1852 discovered and published by Dr. Shea. It tells of Marquette's death and proceeds:

"God did not choose to suffer so precious a deposit to remain unhonored and forgotten amid the woods. The Kis-kakon Indians who for the last ten years have publicly professed Christianity, in which they were first instructed by Father Marquette, when stationed at La Pointe du Saint Esprit at the extremity of Lake Superior, were hunting last winter on the banks of Lake Illinois. As they were returning early in spring, they resolved to pass by the tomb of their good Father, whom they tenderly loved, and God even gave them the thought of taking his remains and bringing them to our church at the mission of St. Ignatius, at Michillimackinac, where they reside.

"They accordingly repaired to the spot, and, after some deliberation, they resolved to proceed with their father, as they usually do with those whom they respect. They opened the grave, divested the body, and though the flesh and intestines were all dried up, they found it whole, the skin being in no way injured. This did not prevent their dissecting it, according to custom. They washed the bones and dried

them in the sun. Then putting them neatly in a box of birch bark they set out to bear them to the house of St. Ignatius. The convoy consisted of nearly thirty canoes, in excellent order, including even a good number of Iroquois, who had joined our Algonquins, to honor the ceremony. As they approached our house, Father Nouvel, who is Superior, went to meet them with Father Pierson, accompanied by all the French and Indians of the place. Having caused the convoy to stop, he made the ordinary interrogations to verify the fact that the body which they bore was really Father Marquette's. Then, before landing, he intoned the 'De Profundis' in sight of the thirty canoes still on the water, and of all the people on the shores. After this the body was carried to the church, observing all that the ritual prescribes for such ceremonies. It remained exposed under a pall stretched as if over a coffin all that day, which was Pentecost Monday, the 8th of June, (1677). The next day, when all the funeral honors had been paid it, it was deposited in a little vault in the middle of the church, where he reposes as the guardian angel of our Ottawa Missions. The Indians often come to pray on his tomb."

In 1877, 200 years later, Father Jacker, of the Society of Jesus, was in charge of the Catholic parish at the present City of St. Ignace. He was a most intelligent and judicious man, scholarly and intellectually vigorous, ardent, indeed, in his duties and zealous for the honor of his order, but far removed from the impulsive enthusiasm which would lead him to treat rash and unfounded suppositions as facts.

I will not open a controversy which was quite spirited twenty years ago, as to whether Father Jacker's belief that the site of the Jesuit church of 1677 and the bones of Father Marquette were discovered by him in 1877, was well founded or not. He had such a belief, and his parishioners at his suggestion erected a very modest monument to mark the spot. I can only quote the conclusion of a letter of his to Dr. Shea, the historian, in which, after a most careful analysis of all the facts bearing on the matter, he says:

"Is it then, you may ask, *absolutely* certain that the modest monument erected by the people of the neighborhood, in the City of St. Ignace, marks the true site of Father Mar-

quette's grave? I am not yet prepared to say so. But I have not heard of, nor can I imagine, any circumstance connected with our search, that would warrant any *positive* doubt. Everything it seems to me, answers the requirements of good circumstantial proof so nicely—thousands of judicial decisions are rendered on much slighter evidence—that mere chance could have brought about such an orderly combination of facts with as much probability only, as two alphabets of type, scattered on the ground, might be expected to form, in the proper succession of letters, the name of Marquette; but if you or any one else are leaning more on the side of doubt, I shall not quarrel with you.

“Some of the remains were re-interred under the monument together with specimens of the *debris*. Other pieces are in the possession of a number of the admirers of Father Marquette, all over the country. The greatest and most interesting collection (the bones being arranged in a neat casket, presented for that purpose, by Rev. Father Faeber of St. Louis), will be piously preserved in the Marquette College of Milwaukee. I thought it would be safer there than in the hands of

Your friend,

EDWARD JACKER.”

I have given this quotation from Father Jacker's letter only because historic doubts have been cast on the assumption that Marquette's relics were found at St. Ignace, by members of this Society of undoubted sagacity and acumen, notably, Mr. H. H. Hurlbut in a paper read before it on October 15, 1878, and by Robert Fergus later.

I must think, however, that these gentlemen (and I have read their papers carefully), were the ones who jumped at conclusions rather than Father Jacker, whose reasons for believing that he had actually discovered the remains of Marquette, they had evidently never seen.

But it is really of small importance whether Father Jacker or the sceptics are right. All agree that no more fitting place than the Island of Mackinac—at the entrance of this great Mississippi Valley which he first explored—can be found for a national monument to this intrepid soldier of the Cross.

It was the supposed discovery of his relics which first gave form to this idea. On August 8th and 9th, in 1878, an association was formed at Mackinac Island for the purpose of securing this monument. Senators Stockbridge and Ferry, of Michigan, were prime movers in the enterprise, which they believed would reflect honor on their state, and the latter was the first President of the Association. Invitations to attend the meeting at Mackinac Island in 1878 had been given to members of the various Historical Societies of the West, and if I am not much mistaken this Society was represented, I think by the late Hon. Thomas Hoyne and others.

For various reasons, the movement—although commenced and fairly under way—soon became quiescent and remained so until the last summer, when a determined effort to revive it, this time with undoubted prospects of success, was made. A new organization, to be incorporated under the laws of Michigan, was formed and called The Marquette Monument Association. Mr. MacVeagh has consented to act as its President, and I have the honor to be its Secretary. Mr. Peter White, of Marquette, an ardent admirer of Marquette whose memory in the prosperous city on Lake Superior which is named for him he has done much to honor, is its Treasurer. Its Trustees are Archbishop Ireland and the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops of Michigan, Davies and Foley, Gov. Peck, of Wisconsin, who had much to do with the erection in the National Hall of Statuary at the Capitol at Washington, of Marquette's statue as one of Wisconsin's contributions to that Valhalla, Mayor Maybury, of Detroit, James F. Blair, of St. Louis, Mr. Onahan, of Chicago, Mr. Dormer, of Buffalo, and Messrs. Fenton and Bailey, of Mackinac Island.

The somewhat rigid laws of Michigan concerning the details of incorporation have caused some delay, but the difficulties have been surmounted and within a few days now the incorporation will have been definitely consummated and the Association ready for work.

The Park Commissioners of Michigan, through the influence of Mr. White, have generously donated a magnificent site for a heroic statue of Marquette and a surrounding

park, just below the fort at Mackinac and in full view of the pathway of all vessels entering Lake Michigan. The statue, when erected, will be a worthy national monument to the noblest of our early pioneers of the West—and very fitly will be the first object that must attract the attention and command the respect of the countless thousands of Americans who are destined in future years to visit the fairy isle of Mackinac.

Adjourned.

CHARLES EVANS,
Secretary.

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